



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Statement by Maj. Gen. Albert H. Wilkening on the death of Wisconsin Army National Guard Specialist Stephen W. Castner**

I speak for the entire Wisconsin National Guard family when I express my sorrow on the loss of Specialist Stephen W. Castner and my deep sympathy for his family. Specialist Castner was one of Wisconsin's finest citizens — a young man who first served his country for four years in the active duty U.S. Air Force, then continued his service with the Wisconsin Army National Guard at a time Guardsmen were mobilized in great numbers and the likelihood he would be called was high.

Just 12 days ago, I saw Steve and his fellow soldiers in Mississippi on the eve of his unit's deployment overseas. He was serving his state and nation with honor and distinction as a member of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery when an improvised explosive device took his life and wounded three of his fellow Wisconsin Army National Guard soldiers.

My heartfelt condolences go out to Specialist Castner's family and loved ones. I pledge to the Castners all the support of the Wisconsin National Guard they may need during the difficult days and weeks ahead.

In tribute to Specialist Stephen Castner, I am ordering the flags at all Wisconsin National Guard armories, air bases and other facilities lowered to half-staff beginning Wednesday morning, July 26, and continuing until sunset on the day of his funeral service.

On behalf of all 9,900 of Specialist Castner's fellow soldiers and airmen of Wisconsin's National Guard, I salute this fallen hero and pray for the protection and eventual safe return of 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery, and the continued safety of more than 2,600 soldiers and airmen of the Wisconsin National Guard who are currently serving in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Major General Albert H. Wilkening  
The Adjutant General of Wisconsin

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